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Forty Years On * R.P.D.

Geneva * Quæstor

The Engineers' Pay * H. Howarth

Guatemala * A. Boyd

New Magazines and All That * H. Smith

Negro History * W. Gallacher

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TWENTY YEARS HENCE

A SCORE of years ago a radio station asked its listeners: 'What will things be like twenty years hence?' This is how a Spanish worker then pictured the world we live in today: 'In the U.S.S.R. there will be a classless society, but Europe will still be only on the way to building Socialism. The bourgeoisie of some countries will be seeking a way out in war against the U.S.S.R., *but the proletariat will already be capable of putting a stop to it.*' He added that he thought victory would come most painfully to China 'because of the war the imperialists are organising against her'. A sober, accurate picture. Today the bomb-juggling atom-diplomatists crystal-gaze into the future, scaring themselves with their own hideous reflections. The very present they can only see in a glass darkly as they seek means of tearing loose from the grip of negotiation; they

Cling to the clapper of History's bell
Vainly to muffle it ringing their knell.

In contrast hundreds of thousands today, as clear-eyed as the Spaniard of twenty years back and from a higher vantage point, can see beyond these monsters' shoulders an ever wider horizon of limitless possibilities. But what we shall see in our time depends on our seeing to it first that we have a time at all.

'Making Numbskulls Think'

HOW quickly can the mass of peop be made as aware of this as *L.N* readers? Perhaps it is our Canadia readers today who most strike th note of urgency. Easy to see why all their letters bear out Tim Buck' June article *Canada and the U.S Python.* After all, they are living cheek by jowl to 'this U.S. way of life in all its macabre decay', to quote a worker in a 'defence project' in the Far North. 'The crux of U.S. policy is clear. It is to manufacture the greatest super - annihilative weapon so as to blackmail and terrorise the world into fear and submission to this McCarthy police state in all its filthy degeneracy, out to stem progress. It is the new version of Hitler's extermination ovens.' From Farthest West another Canadian describes a municipal book-burning threat and the witch-hunting of a librarian; both incidents seem to have united locally all self-respecting Canadians against the import across the border of these methods of U.S. fascism. Again, from a Canadian paper comes a grim verse to be inscribed on a tombstone: *Pause, stranger, as you pass me by As you are now so once was I, As I am now so you would be, Prepare for death and follow me.* Our reader comments: 'It might make some numbskulls think, who want to rearm Germany.' Many Canadians are keen circulation-raisers; one ex-

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Notes of the Month

Forty Years On

'Of boasting more than of a bomb afraid,
A soldier should be modest as a maid.'
EDWARD YOUNG, 'The Universal Passion', 1725.

THE visit of Sir Winston Churchill and Mr. Eden to President Eisenhower in Washington opens up all the questions of the present international situation and the decisive choice for peace or war which has to be made. The sudden announcement of the decision to hold this meeting follows on the collapse of the French Laniel-Bidault Cabinet over the question of the war in Indo-China; the mounting opposition to E.D.C. and Nazi rearmament; the critical stage reached in the Geneva conference and the divergence of United States and British policy in relation to South-East Asia. It is understood that the talks are likely to cover a very wide range, not only of immediate questions of a South-East Asia Pact of the imperialist powers against the peoples of South-East Asia, with the project for combined military action; but also the questions of German rearmament and Europe; the question of the atom bomb and H-bomb; and possibly the question of future negotiations with the U.S.S.R. for a wider settlement.

Never Again Munich

It is the vital concern of the British people to see that this sudden dramatic flight of an aged Premier to Eisenhower shall not repeat the experience of the previous dramatic flight of Chamberlain to Hitler, to end in a Munich of surrender to the war plans of American

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imperialism, but shall on the contrary, voice the real demands of the British nation for peace in Europe and Asia and for negotiations between the Powers. The menace arising from the present secret staff talks, the obstruction of negotiations in Geneva on the side of the United States and its satellites and the open drive of powerful American circles towards an aggressive policy of extended military action in Eastern Asia is obvious. We have come to a very critical point in the developmnet of the international situation which calls for the most intensive response and activity from the Labour movement and the people of this country to exercise the decisive influence which they can exercise in order to ensure that the outcome shall correspond to the interests of the people.

Retrospect and Prospect

This conference takes place on the eve of the fortieth anniversary of the First World War. As we approach this fortieth anniversary the lessons of the past crowd in upon us with the menace and the hopes of the present. Twice mankind has not been able to prevent world war. But the rulers of capitalism have no cause to be proud of their record of the past forty years. They have succeeded in devastating the world with wars and destruction. But their success has been their defeat. Socialism has sped forward; the peoples are on the march; the millions of colonial slaves, the majority of mankind, are in full upsurge in every continent. In face of this advance the old dominant rulers can only think in terms of war. They make war in Korea, in Indo-China, in Malaya, in Kenya; they invade and devastate; they pay and arm military dictatorships in the Middle East or Latin America; they pile up arms; they rearm Nazism or Japanese militarism; they threaten a third world war with new barbarous weapons of limitless mass destruction. Yet everywhere the resistance of the peoples blocks their path. They have failed in China, in Korea, in Indo-China; they are failing in Malaya and Kenya. The peoples of Europe are in revolt against rearming Nazism. The subsidised Cabinets fall. The new weapons have aroused anger, in place of intimidating into submission. In spite of all, negotiations of the powers have begun, at Berlin, at Geneva. The idea of peace, of peaceful co-existence, has won a section of the ruling capitalists and big traders. There are cracks in the war camp.

Tender Plant of Peace

The plant of peace is still tender and fragile. The plans of war are still openly and noisily proclaimed by the military leaders of imperialism. During the last few weeks we have been within an

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inch of major extended war in South-East Asia; and this threat can flare up anew in a moment, as the war camp manoeuvres to wreck Geneva. But the relation of forces in the world has changed irreversibly, and shifts further every day in favour of the peoples. The menace is no longer of the superior power of imperialism crushing the peoples. The menace is of the madman's plunge of the dying beast, which could still spread wreckage over the entire world. Against this menace we need to strengthen every bastion of peace, support very move for peace, win every ally for peace. Such is the precarious balance, of menace and of hope, which we have reached on this fortieth anniversary of the first world war.

Crisis of the War Camp

American imperialism, as the leader of the war camp of imperialism, has received a series of checks and rebuffs during the first half of this year without parallel in the history of modern diplomacy. Herein is at once the hope and the menace of the present situation. The hope, because it reveals how everywhere in every country the tide is turning against the aggressive aims of the American expansionists. The menace, because the infuriated war clique at present in power in the United States, represented by the Dulles, the Radfords and the Gruenthers grows every day more desperate and reckless, lashing out at allies and enemies alike, and capable of wild plunges in policy to resolve the dilemmas by violent action. So long as Dulles remains Secretary of State, so long as Admiral Radford (openly aiming at major war with China) remains in charge of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and so long as the atom bomb-rattling General Gruenther remains in command at Fontainebleau, the shadow of sudden, violent, bellicose action by the American war clique hangs over the world situation. But the crisis of the entire American war policy and diplomacy is inescapable, and is reflected in the deepening cracks in the American war alliance.

Whither Asia?

On every front the defeats and setbacks of American policy have made themselves visible. First in Asia, alike in relation to China, India and South-East Asia. The refusal to recognise China has not succeeded in preventing the increasingly manifest and admitted role of China as a foremost World Power, most strikingly demonstrated at Geneva, as well as in various secondary international conferences and associations, and in the extension of trading relations and new trade negotiations (the F.B.I. delegation to Geneva to negotiate a new trade agreement, as well as the significance of the Labour Party

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Executive Attlee-Bevan-Phillips delegation to China). India has been further alienated by the anti-Chinese policy of the United States and the aggressive support of colonial war in South-East Asia. The supposed triumphant counter-stroke of the military pact with the discredited and shaky puppet government of Mohammed Ali in Pakistan (installed by a characteristic coup from on top, displacing the previous Premier by the former Ambassador to the United States as Premier) has only deepened the breach. The instability of the regime in Pakistan has been shown by the rout of the Government and Moslem League in East Pakistan (containing more than half the population of Pakistan). There the United Front, campaigning on a progressive programme, won 93 per cent. of the votes, and the new democratically-elected Government was immediately displaced by another characteristic American-inspired coup: it is interesting to note that this anti-democratic coup, to replace democratically-elected Ministers by an open dictatorship as in British Guiana, was officially carried out under Section 92A of the Government of India Act of 1935, that is, the Baldwin Tory Government's Act, thus illustrating the peculiar type of 'independence' of Pakistan. The consequent deepening of the breach with India, despite American lavish financial expenditure in India and intrigue with right-wing elements in the hope to carry through a similar coup in India and displace Nehru, was shown by the Indian Government's demand for the withdrawal of the notorious American 'observers' (agents masquerading under the United Nations flag) from Kashmir.

Colombo and Peace

At the Colombo Conference of the five Southern Asian powers, the wrecking efforts of the American satellite Mohammed Ali for Pakistan and of the reactionary pro-American Kotlewala for Ceylon (who has been bargaining with the United States to cancel the rice-rubber trade agreement with China in return for American subsidies) sought to turn the Conference into a pro-American 'anti-Communist' front. But the diplomacy of Nehru was successful, with the aid of the Indonesian Government, and the wavering support of the Burmese Government, in maintaining a combined stand for neutrality, for a cease-fire and peace in South-East Asia, and against colonial domination in South-East Asia.

War Plans in South-East Asia

Most significant has been the initial rebuff to the American plan for extending the war in South-East Asia. The epic victory of the national liberation armies at Dien Bien Phu was a blow, not merely

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for the French imperialists and their Nazi mercenaries, but above all for American imperialism, which had compelled France to continue the war, supplied three-fourths of the finance and arms, and taken over in practice the great part of the higher direction of the war. The consequent desperate last-minute efforts of Dulles to force Britain's hand into accepting immediate combined military intervention in Vietnam ended in a resounding fiasco which laid bare to the world the extent of American diplomatic isolation, brought into the forefront the sharpening divergences of Anglo-American policy in Eastern Asia, and resulted in the hasty departure of Dulles from Geneva. Nor have the subsequent staff talks of the five powers, Britain, the United States, France, Australia and New Zealand, at Washington succeeded so far to bridge the gap; since Britain would still appear, according to reports, to regard Indo-China as a militarily untenable liability and to demand concentration of support for its own war in Malaya:

> The British view, especially after Washington's unmistakable warnings that any intervention in Indo-China must be of the Allies and not of America alone, is that Malaya must be consolidated as an unshakeable base before troops are risked in vast areas, most difficult to defend, such as are presented by Laos, Cambodia and Siam.
>
> (*Observer*, June 13.)

Nevertheless, there is no room for illusions over the danger represented by these secret staff talks of the imperialist Powers preparing their plans for future extended war against the peoples of South-East Asia.

France Shakes Her Chains

What of Europe? The situation from the standpoint of American war aims is no less gloomy. The defeat of the Laniel-Bidault Government, maintained only by dollar support, on the issue of the hated war in Indo-China, meant a further blow to the prospects of ratification of E.D.C., at the same time as the crushing votes at trade union conferences and at the Co-operative Congress had revealed the mounting opposition in Britain to Nazi rearmament. Already the humiliation of Dien Bien Phu, and the decision under American pressure to intensify the war, speed the call-up in order to secure 100,000 additional men, and appoint Frederic-Dupont, the avowed enemy of peace in Vietnam, as Minister for the Associated Territories, and General Ely as Commander, had lashed feeling to fury. The fight against the war in Indo-China was linked with the fight against E.D.C. and against American domination. When the

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majority of the Laniel Government had fallen to two on May 13. Bidault was reported to have said at Geneva:

> They are preparing a Kerensky Government behind my back to effect a *renversement des alliances* (a reversal of alliances).

Whither France?

The efforts of the pro-American right-wing Secretary of the Socialist Party, Mollet, to manipulate a Special Congress in order to secure a mandatory vote for E.D.C. only revealed the further crumbling of his position. While he secured his vote, the opposition to E.D.C. had not only increased, but the majority of the federations were revealed in opposition, and only the block votes of four large federations carried the majority; while his principal aim, to secure a disciplinary mandate to expel Socialist M.P.s voting against E.D.C. (59 had signed a manifesto against it, compared to 29 in favour, and 16 abstaining) was rejected in favour of a milder resolution, which did not in practice prevent leading Socialist M.P.s continuing to vote against E.D.C. On June 2 the Foreign Affairs Committee of the Union Assembly rejected E.D.C. by 14 to 5. On June 9 the Foreign Affairs Committee of the French Chamber rejected E.D.C. by 24 to 18. In the crucial debate on June 12 Laniel himself in a desperate emotional appeal broadened the issue to the whole question of the continuance of the Atlantic Alliance (*i.e.*, the enslavement of France to American domination):

> Is there a majority here for an Asiatic Munich and for repudiation of the Atlantic Alliance? If so, let it manifest itself immediately against a Government that will remain faithful to its alliances.

Communism and National Independence

In the face of this appeal Laniel was defeated by a majority of 306 to 293, and it is understood that a number of additional opponents only abstained from voting in order to avoid the absolute majority of the Chamber (314) which would have compelled an automatic dissolution. The heavy American stranglehold on France will still seek to exert its pressure to secure the necessary intrigues for patching up a new Cabinet of submission. But the task becomes less easy. More and more clearly, all the outstanding voices of French political life and leadership from every quarter have begun to speak out. There is no question of the healthy new currents manifesting themselves in France; and there is no question of the decisive role played in this development by the strongest political party in France, the Communist Party, which held its Thirteenth

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Congress during the days immediately preceding the fall of Laniel, and which by its consistent fight for the national independence of France and for the broadest national unity in the interests of the French people, has not only maintained its premier position, but further increased its mass support to record heights in every electoral test in the recent period.

Nadir of E.D.C.

Thus the prospects of E.D.C. (the figleaf for Nazi rearmament under American leadership), to which Mr. Attlee and Mr. Morrison have so imprudently nailed their colours, have sunk to the lowest point yet. Under the heading 'Alternatives to a European Army' the diplomatic correspondent of the *New York Herald-Tribune* wrote on May 26:

> Washington-High American foreign policy officials have now come to the gloomy conclusion that the European Defence Community Treaty—the device for rearming West Germany—is dead, barring the most spectacular and unforeseen sort of miracle.
>
> Consequently, these officials are now turning their attention, for the first time, to the equally gloomy task of trying to decide on an alternative way of achieving the goal of integrating German forces in Western Europe's defence line-up.

We can appreciate the frankness of the recognition that the pompous title of 'European Army' is only the figleaf for the real aim of re-arming Adenauer and his Nazi Generals, and that, if the figleaf is getting blown away by the storm of popular anger, the real objective of American policy will be continued under other forms.

Precarious Alternatives

But under what forms? Here the diplomatic correspondent discovers the dilemma, if France is opposed to German rearmament. The supposed easy solution, put forward by Churchill at Bermuda, for the direct entry of Adenauer into N.A.T.O., would be impossible if France vetoes it. Similarly a bilateral military treaty between the United States and Adenauer, corresponding to the military treaty with Franco, 'would be subject to disruption by France, which is empowered to veto any Allied action within its occupation zone'. The same objection applies to the third suggested alternative to 'build the present German police force into something resembling an army, but avoid calling it an army' (*i.e.*, to carry still further the extent to which this has already in fact been done in Western Germany). 'Here, again, however, France's veto power on matters regarding her occupation zone might come into play and block action.' It is not surprising that the conclusion drawn from this

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survey is that 'the officials making this study find their task is a gloomy and depressing one'. From the standpoint of American policy the inescapable task remains to bulldoze France. And that is proving less hopeful in face of the stirring of the French people.

'Don't Throw Me Into the Briar Patch'

Hence Dulles has been reduced to renewing his threats of the 'agonising reappraisal' of American policy in Europe, if the European satellites should continue to be disobedient and fail to ratify E.D.C. On June 4 he explained that he was 'worried by the failure to ratify E.D.C.':

> It is obvious that the present situation cannot continue much longer. There exists a conjunction of circumstances which will not indefinitely persist. . . . The continuing failure to ratify E.D.C. would entail a thorough re-examination of American policies, and certain attitudes of policies on our part which seem to have been taken for granted by certain of our allies would have to be reviewed.
>
> (*The Times*, June 5.)

The threat is unmistakable. But what precisely is threatened? 'Withdraw from Europe!' proclaim the irate Congressmen. 'Let the ungrateful beggars stew in their own juice'. 'End military aid'. 'Bring the G.I.s home from Europe'. Well, well. A terrible threat. The European nations will no doubt endeavour to show suitable mortification at such a cruel prospect. It is not surprising that Secretary Dulles, who has been brandishing his threats for many months now, always prefers to keep the concrete contents of his threats vague, as in the beautiful specimen of Americanese above quoted. For, as a very naive American visitor to Europe wrote in a perplexed letter to the Paris edition of the *New York Herald-Tribune* (June 9):

> Your interesting leader entitled 'Mr. Dulles on Europe' seems to suggest that Mr. Dulles' 'agonising reappraisal' would partly consist of 'banning further military aid to nations which failed to ratify E.D.C.'
>
> In France, as in Italy, E.D.C. has its supporters and its opponents. The supporters are in favour of U.S. military aid, but what is important is that its opponents are not only against E.D.C. but also against U.S. military aid.
>
> It would be playing into the hands of most of the anti-E.D.C. parties to give them the impression that by their continued opposition they could achieve not only the scuttling of E.D.C. but, at the same time, prevent U.S. military aid.

In fact, 'you gotta accept protection, see'. To which the benighted European natives may be inclined to reply: 'Hurry up with the "agonising reappraisal", Mr. Dulles'.

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Three Cardinal Blunders

In an interesting review of American policy in Europe on May 24 Walter Lippmann, the candid critic of the entire 'cold war' programme since its public inauguration by the United States in 1947, has pointed to the three fatal blunders which have dogged the American approach and calculations in respect of each of the three major countries of Western Europe. In respect of France the strategy of the American High Command sought to lay on the vassal government of a weak and exhausted state the major military commitments for the war build-up in Europe simultaneously with the major military commitments of colonial war in Eastern Asia and Northern Africa; the resultant overstrain of commitments, deeply repugnant to popular feeling, with the final insult of a rearmed Nazism to become the dominant partner in an Americanised Western European bloc, could only produce chronic crisis. In respect of Britain the basic error, according to Lippmann, was the assumption that Britain could be treated in isolation from the Empire, as shown in the exclusion of Britain from the Anzus Treaty, or in the attempt to drag Britain into the war in Indo-China in opposition to India; whereas the Empire is the key to British policy ('the most important and the most successful international intercontinental inter-racial political community on earth', in Lippmann's admiring phrase), and the interplay of British and Indian policy in relation to China and Asia is of crucial importance for the divergences of British and American policy in Asia. Finally, in relation to Germany the basic error has consisted in the neglect of the question of unification as the primary question from the standpoint of the German nation, and the facile assumption that the mass of the German people would prefer a divided Germany for the sake of 'integration' of a section with 'the West', at the expense of permanent partition, in place of German unification. 'These gross errors about France, Germany and Britain', he declares, have dogged and frustrated American policy in Western Europe, and remained unchanging 'like deep ruts'. He might have added with advantage the basic blunder underlying the entire strategy: the assumption that an American-imposed partition of Europe, arming one half as an American satellite for war against the other half, could ever be acceptable to the nations of Europe as a policy for 'European unity'.

New Currents in Western Germany

There is no doubt that new currents are also stirring in Western Germany. This is not only true of the widest masses of the people,

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who have always shown, as every newspaper poll has revealed, their opposition to rearmament and to the plans to turn them into cannon-fodder for a new Hitlerite crusade to the East. They have had some, and do not want more. Hence the special ferocity of police violence to maintain the regime in Western Germany, the wholesale arrests for support of peace, etc., so that whenever the British or American press desires to illustrate the mythical horrors of life in the German Democratic Republic, authentic photographs are published of the West German police charging and savaging the people. Even the opposition of the German Social Democratic Party to E.D.C. is a distorted reflection of the real popular opposition. Adenauer is still maintained by the handful of big Ruhr barons and militarists who maintained Hitler. But open opposition to the adventurist pro-American policies of Adenauer has now extended to leading circles of the ruling class and prominent political personalities, who fear the disastrous consequences for Germany of his policy of refusing unification and neutrality and barring the door to profitable economic relations with Eastern Europe. Three of the four former Chancellors of the Weimar Republic have come out against the policies of Adenauer. To the consistent line of ex-Chancellor Wirth for peace and neutrality of a united Germany, there have now been added the voices of ex-Chancellor Luther and ex-Chancellor Brüning.

A Warning from the Past

Especially significant was the speech of ex-Chancellor Brüning at the Rhein-Ruhr Club in Düsseldorf at the beginning of June, when he emphasised the importance of the Rapallo Treaty for Germany (the Treaty with Soviet Russia in 1922), which enabled Germany to play a mediatory role in Central Europe instead of being lined up with the West against the East.

> Instead, the Federal Republic had been drawn into an alliance with the West which in no way helped to secure peace in Europe. . . . Dr. Brüning also said that he expected an American economic crisis . . . and concluded that Germany should not be too dependent economically on the United States. The answer, he believed, was to increase trade with the Eastern bloc.
>
> (*Manchester Guardian*, June 7.)

The deep currents for German national unity, and for a pacific role corresponding to the true interests of the German people, in place of being tied up with a sectional military coalition, partitioning Germany and Europe, for dangerous revanchist aims, cannot be indefinitely stemmed by the pressure of American policy. Messrs. Attlee, Morrison and Phillips would be well advised to think again,

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and even to take some advice from their Social Democratic colleagues in Germany, before they bank all their political fortunes on backing Hitler's heir, Adenauer.

Cracks in the War Alliance

Thus on every side the ramshackle War Alliance, built up by American policy with limitless expenditure of dollars and every form of intervention and pressure, is showing signs of strain. Note must also be taken of the developing situation in Japan, where the overwhelming popular opposition to the American-imposed policy of rearmament and justified popular anger against the disastrous consequences of the American H-bomb tests have shaken the Yoshida Cabinet, and found a reflection in the scenes in parliament where police were brought in to assault the deputies, and Premier Yoshida had to announce that he had decided to postpone his visit to the United States. But most important of all is the deepening divergence and development of open contradictions of policy in every sphere between Britain and the United States, the main pillars of the American-dominated war coalition. Slowly, but unmistakably, official Britain has begun to enter on the path, predicted by Stalin in 1952, of endeavouring, in however limited a degree so far, to extricate itself from the American stranglehold and establish its own policy in certain fields independently of American approval or permission. By May 21 the *New York Times* was declaring that the partnership between the two countries 'is now far nearer the breaking point than most people suppose'. On May 12 Joseph Harsch, commenting in the *Christian Science Monitor* on the significance of the division over action in South-East Asia, declared:

> In the grinding ordeal of that crisis all who participated in it glimpsed for a sudden startling moment the possibility of the collapse of the Western Alliance. For an instant it did collapse.

Every effort is made today in official quarters to paper over the cracks. But the divergences continue and increase. And in his latest speech of June 11 at Los Angeles that genius of diplomacy, Secretary Dulles, in the endeavour to cover up his own bankruptcy, delivered an indictment of British policy in Asia from 1931 to 1954.

Bombastes Furioso

It is in this context of extending defeats of American aggressive diplomacy, and advance of the peace forces in every country and continent, with the parallel onset of the American economic crisis and accelerating economic successes of socialism, that the significance must be seen of the new series of violent bellicose proclama-

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tions of the aims of atomic and hydrogen bomb world war, as set out in the speech of General Gruenther in London on June 8, or in the previous utterance of his subordinate, Montgomery, or in the book of Air Marshal Sir John Slessor, *Strategy for the West,* with its foreword by the American General Bradley. This brandishing of the hydrogen bomb and exultant proclamation of the intention to use it first is not a sign of strength, but of weakness. But it is not the less dangerous for that. No sabre-rattling speech of the Kaiser or Hitler ever approached the cold criminality of these pronouncements. All pretences of civilisation or even of the desire to ban such infamous weapons is thrown aside. Previously a ban was declared desirable, but impracticable, owing to the difficulty of co-operation with the Soviet Union. Now this hypocrisy is dropped. The readiness and pressure of the Soviet Union to co-operate in every effective measure for the banning and destruction of all such criminal weapons is universally admitted in all quarters. Now the possibility of a ban is declared to be a menace to be resisted and defeated at all costs by the West, since these criminal weapons must be the principal weapons of the West in a future major war. This is proclaimed to be 'the "New Look" strategy' of the West (not so new—the same since 1945, only more riddled now than ever with obsolete illusions of monopoly and invulnerability). In an approving editorial on Slessor's book the *Observer* of June 13 recorded his view that the atom bomb must be 'the primary agent' of the West in a future war. In the same editorial the same journal noted that 'the atom bomb is the supreme weapon of the gangster'. Quite so. That is the self-chosen epitaph of the Western gangsters on themselves. But in order that it shall not be also the epitaph on a considerable portion of humanity, it is essential to make sure that these weapons shall not be left in the hands of these gangsters, who have now publicly boasted of their readiness to discharge them at any moment chosen by themselves.

Blinkered Bombast

From any rational standpoint this type of utterance of the American atom-generals and their British sycophants is not only criminal, but criminal lunacy. All the most monstrous military and military-diplomatic miscalculations and blunders of the first and second world wars, of the entire Munichite policy of rearming Hitler and its outcome, or Hitler's own megalomaniac dream (ardently echoed by all the British and American military experts) of crashing through the 'crumbling' Soviet regime with six weeks of blitzkrieg, are dwarfed into insignificance by the suicidal delirium of the

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Gruenthers, Montgomerys, Slessors and their acolyte partisans of the glorious vision of atomic warfare. Their vision is the final madness of Western idealist philosophy, which sees always only itself, and can never see outside itself. In their vision of atomic warfare they always see themselves at the delivering end, and never at the receiving end. Reluctantly they have had to admit the explosion of their original illusion of monopoly. But they still cling to the illusion of 'atomic superiority'. If once they had to admit that that also is an illusion, their whole cloud-castle would come toppling to the ground, and they would have to begin to talk sense. Yet the facts cannot long be kept hidden. Writing of the Oppenheimer case, the Alsop Brothers in the *New York Herald-Tribune* of June 9 admitted that the real menace, as they saw it, was not the question of supposed 'security leaks', but the speed of advance and even superiority of Soviet science:

> The first proof of this dread fact came when the Kremlin exploded its large economy-size H-bomb. . . . In this highly important instance Soviet science actually surpassed American science. Our physicists and weaponeers had to scurry to achieve the version of the Russian design that the A.E.C. recently tested in the Pacific.
>
> There are other such proofs. There is the appearance of the new Soviet long-range jet bombers, two years ahead of the Pentagon schedule. There are the recent Soviet advances that we cannot match in the field of electronics, where we used to think that we had a commanding lead. There is the mass of evidence that the Soviets are well ahead of us in the vital field of guided missiles.

Are these developments a menace to the peoples of the West? No, because they are in the hands of those who are exerting all their strength for the absolute banning of all weapons of mass destruction. They are a menace only to the aims of the Gruenthers and the Montgomerys. They are a powerful reinforcement to the peoples of the West to join hands with the Soviet Union and with all the peoples of the world in securing the banning of such monstrous weapons and in pressing forward for a policy of peace.

Time to Make Peace

It is time for all the parties and politicians of the West without exception to recognise the facts of life: to end the senseless and self-destructive policies of 'diplomacy by strength' and anti-communist hysteria; to recognise that the Western powers have no divine right of either material or moral superiority to dictate to the world; and that the only alternative is to negotiate genuinely on a basis of equality for peaceful co-existence, for the rights of national independence of all nations, for the equal rights of differing economic

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and social systems, for the banning of weapons of mass destruction and the reduction of armaments, and for the fullest economic and social intercourse. This is no longer a question of a policy of a section. It is common sense for all. It is the strength of a Churchill among the politicians of the ruling class that in the current period, through all the devious twistings of his policy, and while still remaining in practice a full protagonist of the American alliance and atomic diplomacy, his utterances have nevertheless publicly expressed this sense of the need to negotiate; and it is for this that the old Munichite Tory pack are now in full cry after him, not because of parliamentary salaries, but because they suspect him of readiness to negotiate. It is above all the strength of the masses of the labour movement that they have sensed this need, with their overwhelming fight to stop Nazi rearmament, to ban the H-bomb and atom bombs, to end the colonial wars, to negotiate a full and peaceful settlement and trade with the Soviet Union and China. Their decisive fight is still hampered by the old Transport House right wing, the same that sought to force non-intervention in Spain on the movement or cheered Chamberlain's mission to Munich. But the strength of the movement can and must overcome these obstacles. If we can rally the majority of the labour movement and of the people of this country, in unity with the peoples of France, Italy and Germany, to defeat the plans for Nazi rearmament; and if we can unite to defeat the schemes for a new military South-East Asia Pact of the imperialist powers and combined military action in South-East Asia, compelling instead the negotiations begun at Geneva to be pressed forward to a settlement, then we shall have taken the decisive steps forward at this present stage to open the way to the victory for peace throughout the world, before the mad dogs can let loose the extended war they are so openly planning.

June 16, 1954. R.P.D.

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GENEVA

QUÆSTOR

TWO months ago, on the eve of the Geneva Conference, we summed up the preliminary statements made on both sides: 'The U.S.A. and its satellites entered the Geneva conference-rooms swinging the H-bomb from their finger-tips, with plans to extend the war and roaring threats, the Soviet Union came with proposals for a commonsense compromise in both Korea and Indo-China, leaving threats to those who are impressed by them'.

These lines are written before the end of the conference, but sufficient has been said, in the seven weeks since it opened on April 26, to show that these were in fact the main lines on which the conference proceeded—although another factor, the rising anger of the people in France and Britain, must be taken into account if some things that happened at Geneva are to be rightly understood.

In a series of public and private ('restricted') meetings, and also at private consultations between heads of delegations, the Geneva conference discussed two questions—developing the armistice in Korea into a peaceful and permanent settlement, and achieving peace and unity in Indo-China. It is illuminating to compare the main proposals made on these subjects.

On Korea, the chief delegate of the Korean People's Democratic Republic, Nam Il, made the following six-point proposal on April 27:

1. The governments of North and South Korea agree to free all-Korean elections to a National Assembly, *on a strictly proportional basis according to population*, with a view to the Assembly establishing a single all-Korean Government.

2. The national assemblies of North and South Korea to elect members to an all-Korean Commission which should organise the elections and take immediate steps to bring the two parts of the country closer to each other in economic and cultural matters: the Commission to include representatives of the larger democratic organisations on both sides (Nam Il subsequently made it clear that there should be equal numbers on the two sides, since essentially the Commission's job was conciliation and agreement between different governments).

3. The Commission to draft an Electoral Law, ensuring genuine democratic elections in conditions of freedom, excluding foreign interference and intimidation of voters: and also to take steps to assure freedom of meeting, press and nomination of candidates—without discrimination.

4. The Commission to take immediate steps to develop trade, financial

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relations, transport, border contacts, freedom of movement and correspondence, scientific and cultural relations between North and South Korea.

5. All foreign armed forces to be withdrawn from Korea within six months.

6. The States most interested in maintaining peace in the Far East to ensure the peaceful development of the country.

These proposals were supported by the representatives of the U.S.S.R. and China. In view of subsequent events some comments may be made on this scheme, which was attacked by the U.S.A., French and British Governments.

It will be noticed that the North Korean government was ready to accept an Assembly in which the deputies from its territory would be in a minority; it was obviously sure that unity of the nation was well worth that. The idea that the Koreans themselves should sit down together and work out their own electoral law, arrange their own elections, jointly guarantee freedom of voting to their citizens, etc., free from all foreign armed dictation, is at the bottom of points 2 to 5. It was attacked because allegedly there was bound to be deadlock. Yet deadlock would be much more certain if Great Powers with conflicting policies had their troops in the country: and experience in the past has given no grounds for belief that the presence of American troops anywhere guarantees free elections. The proposals, above all, were a genuine compromise: the North Koreans had no more reason to love or respect Syngman Rhee's regime than he and his friends had to love theirs, yet their proposals asked for no privilege and claimed no advantage.

Against them, the South Koreans on May 22 put forward the following alternative main proposals:

1. Free elections to be carried out under United Nations supervision, within six months, in North Korea and South Korea in accordance with the South Korean constitution.

2. Before, during and after the elections United Nations supervisory personnel to have freedom of movement, speech, etc., 'to help create conditions of a free atmosphere'.

3. Candidates and their families to have freedom of movement, speech and other human rights, 'such as are recognised and protected in other democratic countries'.

4. Representation to be proportional to the population; a census for this purpose to be held under United Nations auspices.

5. The all-Korea Legislature to meet at once after the elections and decide (i) whether new elections be held for a President, (ii) whether the South Korean Constitution be amended, (iii) what military units if any be disbanded. The South Korean Constitution to remain in force subject to any such amendments.

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6. Chinese forces to be withdrawn a month before the elections.

7. Withdrawal of United Nations force *may* begin before the elections, but must not be completed before the new Korean Government has effective control of the whole country and this is certified by the United Nations (which also guarantees Korean integrity and independence).

These proposals by May 28 had been supported by the U.S.A., Australia and four other delegations: the U.S.A. therefore took public responsibility for them (in case anyone had been in doubt about where they came from). And this is not surprising.

They would ensure that Syngman Rhee's government would be able to establish its terrorist, police regime throughout Korea before any elections. In doing this, it would have the backing of the 'United Nations' forces—the big majority of which are American—just as it did in the notorious elections of 1948 and 1954, which were exposed even in the most 'loyal' Tory papers. American 'supervisors' would ensure that a 'free atmosphere 'was created—just as it is in the realms ruled for so many years by Senator McCarthy and before him by the anti-Communist laws in the U.S.A. Thus Communist and class-conscious workers standing as candidates, and their political parties, would have a wonderful guarantee of their rights, 'such as are recognised and protected in other democratic countries' —and how dare you refuse that title to the United States? The legislature elected under these promising conditions would have full freedom to sack Syngman Rhee, amend his Constitution and disband his army—if it wished to.

In other words, the proposals put forward on May 22 were an arrogant claim to unify the country on Syngman Rhee's terms. So far from there being any element of compromise in them, they were such as might have been dictated by a victor. To expect an unbeaten North Korea to accept them, after such tremendous sacrifices, would of course be foolish. And as the Americans are not fools, they obviously put these terms forward, through their puppet, because they neither expected nor wanted an agreement.

The facts themselves, therefore, enable one to judge perfectly clearly which side was ready for a give-and-take peace, and which side wanted a breakdown at all costs, with the possibility, not only of resumption but of extension of the war.

On Indo-China, M. Bidault, the French Foreign Minister, made the following proposals on May 8:

1. Both Viet Minh and French forces to be withdrawn to definite zones (the French to have the Red River delta around Hanoi).

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2. All Viet Minh forces to be withdrawn from Pathet Lao (Laos) and Khmer (Cambodia).

3. Irregular forces to be disarmed and disbanded.

4. Prisoners of war and interned civilians to be released.

5. Hostilities to stop.

6. International supervision of these arrangements (later expanded to mean that the United Nations should appoint a commission of neutrals as supervisors—for Vietnam only, not Pathet Lao or Khmer).

7. All States represented at Geneva to guarantee these arrangements, with the right to 'act jointly or individually in the event of any violation'.

The first thing that strikes one about these proposals is that they contain no political offer—no promise of the independence and sovereignty of Indo-China or its constituent states, nor of the withdrawal of French troops which alone could make sovereignty effective. Yet this is what the war is about. True, the French and Americans argued that independence had already been *promised* to the three native governments existing in French-occupied territory —the Emperor Bao Dai (resident on the Riviera) and the Kings of Cambodia and Laos. But a promise to sign a treaty of independence is not the same as independence: and indefinite maintenance of French troops in the country (such as the French Government expected to get by the future treaties with their puppet rulers) would not be compatible with its independence: and in any case, as the *Manchester Guardian* diplomatic correspondent wrote from Geneva on April 26, about the demand for free elections in Vietnam: 'Even Frenchmen are now inclined to accept the probability that such elections would result in a majority for Ho Chi Minh'—an opinion also recorded freely in quite conservative American and French newspapers. Bidault steadfastly refused to make any political addition to his proposals of May 8—although he did not dissociate himself from the 'proposals' made four days later by the Vietnam puppet government, that Bao Dai be recognised as sole ruler, that the Viet Minh forces might be incorporated in his army and that elections be held under United Nations supervision!

In the absence of any serious attempt to meet the demand of the peoples of Indo-China for independence, Bidault's military proposals acquired a particular significance. They can be seen quite clearly as intended to put the French armed forces in the best possible position for resuming the attack on the patriots at a convenient moment. The French would be guaranteed the big port of Hanoi, and by the patriots evacuating, or laying down their arms in, Pathet Lao and Khmer, the French would be ensured the other coastal approaches,

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including Saigon in the south. The people of Pathet Lao and Khmer, whom even Eden admitted to have been in rebellion more than once in the past, would be left to foreign military rule, and therefore disheartened and demoralised—an important factor in the struggle against foreign occupying forces. Disbandment of 'irregulars' (*i.e.*, of guerrillas), constituting about one-third of the patriot forces, would heavily tip the balance in favour of the French—who naturally had no irregulars, while guerrilla warfare is the natural resort of a people rising against foreign invaders with far superior armaments. United Nations appointment of 'neutrals' as supervisors would mean in practice that the Americans could ensure that at least a majority, if not 100 per cent. of them, would be satellites of the U.S.A. or its allies against the U.S.S.R. And the right to act 'individually in the event of any violation' would mean that the U.S.A. could then both decide for itself there was violation (or have its tame majority decide) and also intervene on the side of the French occupying forces. 'I'll be judge, I'll be jury. . . .'

Thus the Bidault proposals meant, in fact, rejection of any agreement with Viet Minh except one which might be described as 90 per cent. surrender at once and the other 10 per cent. whenever the French High Command in Indo-China decided the time was ripe. Of course it stood no chance of acceptance, and certainly its author must have known this.

Bidault's proposals were warmly supported by the American, British and several other delegations.

As against these, the Viet Minh chief delegate, Pham Van Dong, put forward the following proposals on May 10:

1. The French to recognise the sovereignty and independence of Vietnam, Khmer and Pathet Lao.

2. All foreign troops to be withdrawn within an agreed time.

3. Free general elections in the three states: to be prepared by a consultative conference in each, representing the two sides, and ensuring freedom of activity to patriotic parties, groups and organisations. A single government to be established in each State as a result of these elections, pending which each side would administer the districts under its control under the armistice agreement.

4. The Vietnam Democratic Republic to examine its voluntary entry into the French Union (the same for the other two States); and all three to recognise 'the existence of economic and cultural interests of France in these States'. The three governments, when formed, to come to an agreement with France about this on the basis of 'equality and mutual interest'.

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5. No persecution by either side of persons who collaborated with its opponents during the war.

6. Exchange of prisoners of war.

7. All these measures to be preceded by an armistice in Indo-China, under agreements to be concluded between France and the three States providing (*a*) for simultaneous cease-fire, and determining the districts occupied by the two sides, in all three states of Indo-China, (*b*) complete stopping of all dispatch of reinforcements of armaments or armed forces to Indo-China, (*c*) establishment of supervision of these conditions by mixed commissions of the two sides in all three states.

Later, Molotov on May 14 proposed, and the Viet Minh delegate accepted, that there should be a commission of neutral countries to supervise the fulfilment of the armistice terms. This was supplemented by an agreement, on the proposal of Chou En-lai (May 27), that simultaneous discussions about the practical details of an armistice, between military representatives of France and Viet Minh, should be started in Geneva and in Indo-China. Such talks began in Geneva on June 2.

Running through these proposals was the clearly expressed desire, while standing firm on the essential point—full and precise guarantees for the independence and integrity of the states of Indo-China—to show the utmost readiness to compromise on everything else. First and outstanding was the offer to recognise the special interests of France in the peninsula, not only by special agreements but by direct political association on terms of equality. Equally clear was the offer to treat the rival governments, not as French puppets—which they are—but on a basis of equality: if in the armistice negotiations they could show their control of those parts of Vietnam, Khmer and Pathet Lao which they claim, their right to rule in those parts would not be challenged. Simultaneous cease-fire in all three states (separately negotiated) was essential to prevent either side using an armistice in one part of Indo-China to concentrate still more forces in other parts. But the provision of neutral control would ensure that neither side would gain any advantage.

The Viet Minh proposals were admittedly put forward with the full conviction that the overwhelming majority of the peoples of Indo-China would, given the chance to express their opinion peacefully, plump for the Viet Minh cause and that of the resistance movements in Pathet Lao and Khmer. But they offered a fair compromise, with no open or secret military privileges for Viet Minh: 'a fair field and no favour'. They represented, therefore (unlike Bidault's proposals) a scheme for a peaceful compromise settlement, with advantages for both sides. They were supported by the dele-

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gations of the U.S.S.R. and China: and opposed by the delegations of the U.S.A., France and the United Kingdom.

Thus, here too, the facts themselves enable one to judge which side wanted to keep the dangerous war in Indo-China in being, and (bearing in mind the continuous American threats and pressure for a 'South-East Asia Pact') probably extend it; and which side wanted peace by agreement.

On the background of these basic experiences of the Geneva conference, the attitude taken up by the various delegations becomes particularly clear.

The United States' delegation from the very beginning, by the reluctant evidence of all its best journalistic friends, adopted an attitude of boorish hostility to any agreed settlement. After it became clear that, contrary to many officially inspired predictions in the American press, the conference would not break down after the first week, Dulles flew back to the U.S.A. (May 3). Two days later President Eisenhower announced that discussion of plans for 'South-East Asia security arrangements' were proceeding with America's friends in Washington—followed on May 28 by the announcement that military staff talks would open there on June 3.

The French delegation was distinguished, during the first seven weeks of the conference, chiefly by its delaying tactics, apparently to gain time for the secret military negotiations organised by the Americans in Washington.

The Soviet delegation, while backing to the full the proposals of Nam Il and Pham Van Dong, was distinguished at the conference by the numerous occasions on which Molotov and his assistants came forward with practical proposals for getting out of tangled discussions by concentrating on principles, or by picking out what had been agreed. On June 6 his five-point restatement of what had been agreed on Korea and what still remained outstanding—presence of foreign troops during country-wide future elections, and their supervision by the United Nations (which had been fighting North Korea to get just that result) wrung reluctant tributes from papers like *The Times* and the *Monde*. On June 8, after warning the disrupters, Molotov urged the necessity of getting on with the political side of discussions on Indo-China: and this brought Eden out into the open with *his* ultimatum, described later: one which undoubtedly brought down the Laniel Government.

It was Chou En-lai, for China, who proposed neutral supervision

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of all-Korean elections and simultaneous talks between the French and Viet Minh commands in Geneva and Indo-China. Naturally he supported Nam Il and Pham Van Dong in their proposals: but like Molotov he intervened repeatedly to drag agreed points out of the jungle into which Bedell Smith and his followers ever strove to drag the discussion. The speech he made before the overthrow of the French Government (June 9) gave a telling series of cases where practical suggestions for taking an agreed step forward had been held up by French or American delaying tactics.

Lastly, the British delegation played an ambiguous and shifty part, which in mid-June brought the conference to the point of complete deadlock. More than once, particularly in the first five weeks of the conference, there were occasions when Eden seemed to be influenced by the mighty wave of discontent rising among the British workers at the abject part of flunkey to the Washington gangsters which their government has been playing. On these occasions he and Molotov were able to co-operate in some decision, large or small, which invariably had the effect of carrying the conference a step forward to agreement, in spite of the Americans' sabotage. But then there followed other occasions—and they increased in frequency after May 28, either under furious pressure from inside the Cabinet or else because of a decision to drop the mask of negotiation, some turning-point in secret military preparations having been reached—when Eden reverted to the unsightly role of an American Charlie McCarthy. Why May 28? Because it was on that day that the French government called up 80,000 men and the British government simultaneously announced that the Chief of the Imperial General Staff would take part in military talks at Washington on South-East Asia. Each of these steps was as good as an acceptance once again of the idiotic American 'principle' that bullying, not negotiation, is what counts.

Thus, as already mentioned, Eden joined with Molotov in ensuring the smooth opening of the conference on April 26, much to U.S. disgust. He was the only one of the Western leaders, for weeks, to have friendly private meetings with Molotov and Chou. On May 13 he put forward the idea of genuine free elections under international control in Korea, not necessarily by those countries which took part in the war there: arousing disgust again among the Americans. On May 24 he accepted the idea of military conversations in Geneva, and suggested the parallel talks in Indo-China; which were finally accepted on May 29—the Americans refusing their support.

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On the other hand, in Eden's proposals of May 13 there figured the suggestion—eagerly taken up later by Syngman Rhee's representatives—that foreign troops must remain in Korea during the 'free' elections. On May 20 and 21 he joined the Americans and French in their demand that the resistance movements in Khmer and Pathet Lao must surrender before there were any arrangements for a cease-fire. And although he himself had suggested the scheme for parallel military talks in Indo-China, the fact that a fortnight later there was no sign of them aroused no audible objection on his part.

But the day before the agreement of May 29, as already mentioned, London announced its acceptance of military staff talks in Washington. They began on June 3: and had the immediate effect of bringing Eden into the limelight as dropper-of-spanners-into-the-works. On June 8 he came forward with the ingenious suggestion that the Colombo Powers—Burma, Ceylon, Pakistan, India and Indonesia—should be the neutrals to supervise any Indo-China settlement, and that they should work by majority rule: ingenious because *not a single one* of these States is in diplomatic relations with Viet Minh, while all of them maintain official relations with France, and Ceylon and Pakistan are increasingly tied to America as well (Pakistan has a 'mutual aid' agreement with the U.S.A.). On June 9 Eden produced an ultimatum over Indo-China: no use going on, he said, unless these five are accepted as neutrals, and unless the resistance forces in Pathet Lao and Khmer give up (it should be noted that French military maps long ago showed areas liberated by these forces far from the Viet Minh army and the appeal of Siam to the United Nations is based on their existence on its border, in areas remote from Vietnam). On June 10 Eden delivered a second ultimatum: no agreement on Korea either, unless the United Nations, *i.e.*, the Americans, act as supervisors for Korean elections, and unless foreign troops stay during such elections. Five days later the Americans and their satellite governments broke off discussions on Korea.

Thanks to concessions by China and the U.S.S.R., negotiations on Indo-China continue at the time of writing: but the situation remains extremely critical. The French Government has been overthrown by the revelation of its subservience to the U.S.A. It is high time for the working-class movement of Britain to interfere over Geneva too. World peace will be in deadly peril if the American method of ultimatums is not abandoned by the representatives of Britain.

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Workers of Italy

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Drawing by Guiseppe Zigaina, 1953

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THE ENGINEERS' PAY

H. HOWARTH*

A HOTLY debated argument is developing in the Engineering Unions and factories, and it stems from the wage settlement of March 31, when the engineering workers divided into three categories had wage increases of 8s. 6d., 7s. 6d. and 6s. 6d. respectively against an original demand for 15 per cent. on the consolidated rate. The difference can be summed up in one sentence. 'Are the engineers to apply for a further wages advance to be resolved as quickly as possible, or are they to pursue negotiations which can be dragged out indefinitely around the six year old "New Wages structure"?' Put in these terms, the average engineering worker has no doubts whatever. He was not by any means satisfied with the March settlement, and the magnificent response to the call for the 24-hour token stoppage indicated quite clearly to the employers and the trade union leaders that the men and women of the industry were prepared if need be to take action to win the full 15 per cent.

The settlement obviously did not make up for the increase in the cost of living from November, 1952, the date of the previous wage increase of 7s. 4d. During that time a formidable increase in the cost of living took place embracing every item of staple foodstuffs. The phrase 'rationing by the purse' became a grim reality for thousands of families, 10 per cent. of the people were not taking their meat rations, and 13 per cent. were going without cooking fats—nearly five million men, women and children out of a population of 48 million! Throughout the country at the same time Council house tenants were paying rent increases varying between 1s. to 12s. a week (and bedevilled by prying means tests into the bargain). Travel by bus, tram and train were all at least 10 per cent. dearer.

So much for the reality of the immediate past: our average worker has no illusions as to the prospects for the immediate future either. Butter is now a rare titbit at 4s. per pound. The private landlord is drafting notices of rent increases and the authorities are preparing new increases in fares on road and rail. The annual conference of the Confederation of Shipbuilding and Engineering Unions meeting in August will therefore have to face the facts, *and decide as a matter*

*As many readers will know, Mr. Howarth is Chairman of the Sheffield District of the Amalgamated Engineering Union.

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of urgency that a new wages demand for a substantial increase must be presented as quickly as possible, irrespective of any discussions that may take place with the employers on changes in the wages structure.

The Conferences of other engineering unions following the Amalgamated Engineering Union have confirmed the arguments for a new wage demand, they include the Vehicle builders, the Foundry Workers, the Electricians and the Woodworkers. The A.E.U. itself leaves the way open for a reconsideration of policy following the annual meeting of the Confederation, and undoubtedly the strong feelings of the rank and file exerting pressure on their leading committees in the weeks that lie ahead will lead to a clear cut wage demand that this time, if need be, will move on to even greater heights than the historic stoppage of December 2 if the employers adopt the same attitude as they did on the last occasion. It is this attitude of 'not a penny' by the employers that is worrying many trade union leaders, who in the past few years have become accustomed to a minimum offer by the employers which they have gratefully accepted in spite of the opposition of the rank and file. Why should the employers adopt this attitude when 1953 showed a further stepping up in profits on the previous all-time records of previous years?

In 1953, 3,000 companies increased dividends by over £13 millions, free bonus shares were distributed right and left and (a sure sign of increasing prosperity in industry) the big banks increased their dividends. This, in spite of the fact that the international trade war is intensifying: the policy of wage rejection therefore is purely and simply because of the fears of the future entertained by big business. No longer is it possible to put the cost of wage increases on to the price of the commodity. This is exemplified by the following:

	Changes in	
	Wage Rate	*Export Prices*
1938-47	+67%	+122%
1947-52	+30%	+ 46%
1952-Nov. 53	+ 5%	- 4%

The above shows pretty conclusively that the increased profits of the last period have come almost exclusively out of increased productivity and cost reductions. Productivity in engineering jumped 23 per cent. from 1947 to 1952 with only a 4 per cent. increase in manpower. That employers are apparently not doing so badly in what is now admitted to be a sellers' market is quite clearly shown

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by the following quotation from the *Manchester Guardian* (1/2/54):

> That an examination of British and German export prices since world commodity prices started to fall in 1951 brings out the remarkable fact that while British prices have been reduced by 5 per cent. German export prices have been cut by over 9 per cent. . . . it is widely assumed that wage rates here have risen much more than in Germany, but that does not seem to be the case . . . on all counts German industry seems to have squeezed costs much more severely than British exporters in the battle for overseas markets.

The flat refusal of any increase at all to agricultural workers despite the justice of their claim is a foretaste of the attitude of the engineering employers towards the wage claims of Engineering and Shipbuilding workers.

However, the workers in this decisive industry have already demonstrated before, during and after December 2 last year that they are prepared to fight for wage increases. There is no doubt that in the workshops where at the moment a movement is developing for 100 per cent. trade unionism, in the trade union branches and district committees there will be evidenced in unmistakable fashion the strength of feeling for a speedy increase of wages for every section—including the women and youth in engineering and shipbuilding.

The ruling class of this country are growing exceedingly nervous of the prospects of a major recession spreading from the U.S.A., and the intensification of the battle of the world wheat market with the U.S. Treasury department declaring war on Australia and Canada has certainly not allayed these fears. They remember only too well that the crash in 1929 was preceded by a fall in farm prices. Britain could not face a slump of the magnitude of 1930 and the working class would certainly resist with all the means at their command any and all attempts to reduce their standards of life.

It is in this setting therefore that one must consider more than passing strange the negative stand taken by the leadership of the Confederation of Shipbuilding and Engineering Unions on the question of really fighting to win the maximum extension of East-West trade. The annual conference decision last year went on record for the widest extension of such development as in the best interests of the country as a whole. Following the highly publicised and successful negotiations in Moscow and Peking by British business men the Confederation E.C. decided not to allow any District Conferences to be organised under its auspices unless it was proved that the government was impeding such trade. On

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Friday, May 22, the President of the Board of Trade, Mr. Peter Thorneycroft, disclosed that out of 154 applications for licences involving £25 millions little more than £2 millions have been approved. That was as far as Russian trade was concerned; in regard to China out of £1½ million of orders only a mere £100,000 had been approved; in addition another group of orders for electrical equipment to the value of £500,000 had been refused. It remains to be seen what will happen to the £7 million textile machinery order won by British business men after nine weeks of discussions in the face of keen competition. Mr. Harold Stassen in charge of foreign operations for the U.S. Government made a hurried visit here in March and apparently had more than a little success in making the British Government toe the line in regard to restricting East-West trade. It is to be hoped that the Confederation will now implement its original resolution particularly in view of the deepening signs of economic crisis in the U.S.A. which will drastically reduce exports of British engineering goods and bring mass unemployment to hundreds of thousands of engineers in this country.

The need to fight on the questions of higher wages and East-West trade are therefore of prior importance to all engaged in engineering. The engineers will not be content to live on a fodder basis, they are entitled to a bigger share in the fruits of their productivity. They want to play their part in easing international tension by developing a peaceful exchange of goods between East and West and if a handful of hard-faced business men behind a Tory Government attempt to hinder our fundamental interests they must be swept out of office. This is certainly the view of the overwhelming majority of the rank and file—men, women and youth—who earn their livelihood in this decisive industry.

FROM THE *LABOUR MONTHLY* OF 25 YEARS AGO

THE AMERICAN EMPIRE—1929

The struggle of the workers of the world against the thralldom of imperialism is largely a struggle against the present imperialist ascendancy of the British Empire and the United States of America. The British Empire is already controlling more than 400,000,000 of the world's population, while the United States, by means of foreign investments, are rapidly advancing towards what has been called 'the creation of an American Empire of subordinate states'.

From *The World Struggle Against Imperialism*, by R. Bridgeman, (Secretary of the British Section of the League Against Imperialism), July, 1929.

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UNPUBLISHED LENIN DOCUMENTS

[The Soviet magazine 'Kommunist' (No. 6, April 1954) has printed some hitherto unpublished manuscripts of V. I. Lenin which were discovered in Cracow. They were written in 1912-13 for the newspaper 'Pravda', but were not published. Three of these articles (given below) are devoted to the United States of America. Ed. L.M.].

After the Elections in America

We have already pointed out in *Pravda* the great significance of the split in the Republican Party in America and the formation of Roosevelt's* 'Progressive Party'.

Now the elections have ended. The 'Democrats' have won and the consequences that the socialists foresaw are beginning to show themselves. Roosevelt's 'Progressive Party' with its 4½ million votes is a typical example of a bourgeois-reformist trend that has appeared on the scene with American *élan*.

The fate of this trend is of general interest precisely because it exists in one form or another *in all* capitalist countries.

The two principal streams of every bourgeois-reformist trend are: the bourgeois big shots, politicians who dupe the masses with promises of reforms, and the duped masses, who feel that it is impossible to go on living in the old way and who follow the charlatan who makes the biggest promises. And so, in America, on the very morrow of the elections the newly-formed Progressive Party is splitting at the seams.

The bourgeois politicians who deceived the masses with Roosevelt's charlatanism, are now already shouting for *fusion* with the Republican Party. What is the matter? Very simple: the politicians need lucrative posts, which the victorious party in the U.S.A. distributes among its supporters in an especially brazen fashion. The split among the Republicans allowed the 'Democrats' to win. Now the Democrats are rapturously sharing out fat slices of the social cake. It is clear that their rivals are ready to renounce the 'Progressive' Party and to return to the *single* Republican Party, which has every chance of defeating the Democrats.

*Theodore Roosevelt, president of the U.S.A. 1901-1909.

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A crude, cynical trading of 'party principle', is it not? But we see absolutely the same things in *all* capitalist countries; and the *less* free the country, the dirtier and baser is this trading of party principle by the bourgeois leaders, the greater the importance of intrigues behind the scenes and private 'connections' in obtaining concessions, subsidies, profitable business (for Messieurs the lawyers), etc.

The other wing of every bourgeois-reformist trend—the duped masses—has now also revealed itself in the American manner—uniquely, freely and clearly. 'Dozens of persons who voted for the Progressive Party', writes the New York workers' newspaper *Appeal to Reason*,* 'keep coming to the socialist newspaper headquarters and offices for all kinds of information. These are mostly young people, trustful and inexperienced. They are the lambs whom Roosevelt has shorn, people without any knowledge of politics in economic science. They feel instinctively that the Socialist Party with its million votes is more important than the $4\frac{1}{2}$ million votes cast for Roosevelt and they are most of all concerned to know whether the very small reforms promised by Roosevelt are feasible.'

'It goes without saying', adds the *Appeal to Reason*, 'that we willingly provide all these "progressivists" with *all* information and do not let any of them go without our socialist literature'.

Such is the fate of capitalism, that the most wily tricksters and manipulators 'work'—for the benefit of socialism!

(Written in the second half of November, 1912.)

Excessive Zeal

Who is thinking about what: the proletarian about the necessity of peace, the capitalists about the 'patriotic' examples of the war in the Balkans. Each in his own way. The workers assert that a Balkan revolution would not cost a hundredth of the sacrifices of the Balkans war and would produce democratic results a thousand times broader and more stable.

The capitalists—both the 'Rights' and the liberals, including our progressivists and Cadets—assert in every key that the united bourgeois in the Balkans have snatched something, while the united bourgeois in England, France and Russia could 'by agreement' have snatched very much more.

One American 'patriot', a patriot of the money bags, learned from

*American socialist newspaper, founded in 1895.

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somewhere that there were ships in the Greek navy that had been built from the private means of Greek millionaire magnates.

Our American Guchkov or American Maklakov hastens to make the widest propaganda of the great patriotic example. 'If only the shores of our country', he writes, 'and all our ocean trade were protected by giant-dreadnoughts with the names "Morgan", "Astor", "Vanderbilt", "Rockefeller"! At the sight of such an example the people would grumble less at the concentration of capital in the hands of the billionaires and at the unequal distribution of wealth!'

'A patriotic, but unpractical proposal', say the American workers, laughingly. Carry out your magnificent plan, gentlemen, we are all in favour of it. Up to now the Rockefellers, Morgans, etc., here in America have been hiring private detachments of armed men to defend their property and to fight strikers. Now let the billionaires make it quite obvious to the people that all the 'foreign' defence of the 'state' is *defence of the monopolies and profits* of the owners of our trusts! Let us see what the effect on the American workers will be when they see super-dreadnoughts with the names: 'Morgan', 'Rockefeller', etc.—patriotic emotion or Socialist convictions. Will they bow and scrape still more to the capitalists or more firmly demand the transfer of all the trusts, of all the property of the trusts, into the hands of the whole of society, into the hands of the workers themselves?

. . . The American 'patriot' has been overzealous. . . .

(Written in the second half of November, 1912.)

In America

The 32nd annual congress of the American Federation of Labour, as the federation of trade unions is called, has been held in Rochester. Alongside the rapidly growing Socialist Party, this federation constitutes a fragment of the past: of the old craft, liberal-bourgeois traditions wholly dominating the *aristocracy* of the American working class.

The membership of the federation on August 31, 1911, was 1,841,268. Samuel Gompers, a determined opponent of socialism, was again elected president. However, Max Hayes, the candidate of the socialist workers, obtained 5,074 votes against 11,974 for Gompers, whereas previously Gompers was elected unanimously. The struggle of the socialists against the 'trade unionists' in the American trade union movement proceeds slowly but will surely lead to the victory of the former over the latter.

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Gompers not only fully believes in the bourgeois fable of the 'harmony of capital and labour' but pursues an outright bourgeois policy in the federation against the socialists—although in words he advocates the complete political 'neutrality' of the trade unions! During the recent presidential elections in America, Gompers published in the organ of the federation the programmes and platforms of all three bourgeois parties (Democrats, Republicans and Progressives) but he did *not* publish the programme of the *Socialist* party!!

At the Rochester Congress, protests against this mode of behaviour came even from supporters of Gompers.

The position of affairs in the labour movement of America shows us, as in Britain, a remarkably sharp split between pure-trade-unionist and socialist tendencies, a split between *bourgeois labour policy* and socialist policy. For, strange though it may sound, in capitalist society the working class also can pursue a bourgeois policy, if it forgets its emancipatory aims, reconciles itself to wage slavery and restricts its concern to joining up now with one bourgeois party and now with another for the sake of seeming 'improvements' in its servile position.

The chief historical cause that determined the special prominence and (temporary) strength of bourgeois labour policy in Britain and America is the long-standing political freedom and the unusually favourable conditions, in comparison with other countries, for the development of capitalism in all directions. As a result of these conditions there was formed in the working class an aristocracy that gravitated towards the bourgeoisie, betraying *its own* class.

In the twentieth century, this specific feature of the position of Britain and America is rapidly disappearing; other countries are overtaking Anglo-Saxon capitalism, and the *mass* of the workers is learning socialism through experience of life. The faster the growth of world capitalism, the sooner the victory of socialism in America and Britain.

(Written in the first half of December, 1912.)

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GUATEMALA

ANDREW BOYD

WHY should the United States be so alarmed about the small agricultural republic of Guatemala whose population, mostly descended from the Mayan Indians, is somewhat less than the population of Ireland? Latin-America south of the Mexican border has so far shown no such fear because Guatemala's strength in wealth and arms would be out-weighed many times by any one of the larger countries like Mexico, Brazil or Argentina. Why then does Dulles direct his wrath against Guatemala and rush arms to her immediate southern neighbours, Honduras and Nicaragua? Is it really because Guatemala threatens the peace of the Americas? Or could it be that the profits and privileges of certain United States interests are no longer being given priority of treatment by the Guatemalans? Or is it because Guatemala is the most advanced of the small Central American countries (*e.g.*, the unfortunate British Guiana) who have decided to try new left-wing experiments in government—who have in fact decided to give their people what is no more than a New Deal?

For years the press of the United States has been carrying on a hate campaign against Guatemala and this campaign was stepped up to a new level last January when Senator Alexander Wiley, Chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, issued an indictment of Guatemala as a 'serious beachhead of communism' in the Western Hemisphere and, McCarthy-like, produced a list of leading Guatemalans who, he alleged, were communists. But these charges were, in the usual manner of McCarthyism, grossly exaggerated because in the Guatemalan parliament of 54 members the Communists (Workers Party) have only four representatives. Of the remaining seats 44 are held by the four government parties in coalition (of these the largest party is the Party of Revolutionary Action, 25 seats) six seats are held by Independents who, like the Communists, usually support the Government and only four seats are held by the diehard right-wing opposition. This Government was elected in 1944 when a popular revolution ended the long reign of puppet dictators who had ruled Guatemala at the bidding of United States monopolists.

So Senator Wiley was speaking, not for international peace and security, but for the interests of a powerful United States' combine,

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the United Fruit Corporation, which dominates the fruit-growing industry of Central America and which has had a say in the making and unmaking of dictators and governments in that area for the past 50 years or more. United Fruit is now finding that the popular and progressive Government of Guatemala is not so pliable as one of its own nomination would be.

The only railway in Guatemala is controlled by United Fruit. The complaint of the Guatemalan Government, however, is not so much that this railway is foreign-owned but that the transport policy of United Fruit is crippling the economic development of the country. United Fruit carries its own bananas at very low freight charges, making good the losses thereby incurred by forcing the Guatemalans to pay three times as much for the transport of their goods. The Guatemalan Government countered this policy, not by confiscation or nationalisation, as a Communist government anywhere would have done, but by building a great state highway and a fleet of lorries which, by competing with the railway, would eventually force down transport prices. Guatemalans are already finding that transport by the state highway is cheaper than transport by United Fruit's railway.

Guatemala, like all countries that have long been under the heel of landowners and foreign capitalists, was badly in need of land reform. The Government of Guatemala, however, did not carry through an agrarian revolution such as took place in Mexico, or in Ireland, but merely passed certain laws designed to bring about more cultivation of idle lands and to give surplus land that would not otherwise be cultivated to landless peasants who would make good use of it. Under these laws a landowner can hold as much land as he likes provided he cultivates it or puts it under pasture, though the cattle must actually be using the pasture land. He can even have up to 222 acres without cultivation. This reform has already led, perforce, to more mechanisation of agriculture and to a great increase in crops.

Now it is estimated that United Fruit owned 562,000 acres of Guatemalan land and of these the Government proved that only 37,000 acres were actually planted. The biggest claim that United Fruit could make was that they were using 50,000 acres. The Government therefore, because United Fruit held more land than they would ever use, took over 374,000 acres and paid $547,000 compensation, thus leaving United Fruit with five times more land than they were actually using and three times more than they

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claimed they were using. United Fruit, backed to the hilt by Washington, claimed that compensation should have been $3,500,000.

To this Guatemala replied that United Fruit had given a written pledge never to enforce their claims through diplomatic channels but, at all times, to abide by Guatemalan law. In any case some of the land had been given to United Fruit on a promise to build a port on the Pacific coast—a promise that was never kept—while on the Atlantic side some of the land had been seized by various means despite the protests of the inhabitants. The Guatemalan Government would not yield to pressure from this foreign corporation or from the State Department in Washington.

Since 1944 social reform under the present popular Government has made outstanding progress. Guatemala is free from foreign debt and has a free currency. She has a favourable balance of trade and can finance her own programme of capital development by internal loans. Since 1944 production has increased three times. Air transport, electrical consumption and new building have all gone up double and treble. Government income has also trebled and expenditure on education has gone up seven times since the present government took over.

Washington objects to this progressive trend firstly, because it cuts across the almost feudal privileges of United Fruit and secondly, because of the influence such independent national progress would have on the semi-colonial countries of Central America. Washington also writhes because Guatemala allows complete freedom of political thought and action. Thus Communists and progressives are not hounded in Guatemala as they are in the United States. 'Why should we persecute Communists?' asks Estrade de la Hoz, the Guatemalan Prime Minister. 'Isn't Gutierrez, the general secretary of our trade unions, the best and most honest labour leader in Central America? He is also a university professor, so why should we reject educated people who can help our country just because Washington is in the grip of a scare?'

At the recent Inter-American Conference in Caracas Guatemala won the admiration of Latin-America for the way in which she stood up to the United States. Her delegates received all the applause, though Latin-America, being largely dependent upon United States imperialism voted for the Dulles anti-Communist line.

Washington, fearing the popularity and social progress of Guatemala, is strengthening the military power of 'the banana republics',

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Honduras and Nicaragua, because, says Dulles, Guatemala has received large shipments of arms from Poland. The actual amount of the arms from Poland was 400 tons and was just enough to supply each one of Guatemala's 7,000 soldiers and 3,000 police with a pistol and a tommy-gun. They were purchased because Guatemala discovered last year that some of her neighbours were plotting armed intervention and they were purchased from Poland because neither the United States of America nor the Western powers would supply them.

It is therefore clear that the real threat to peace in the American continent is not Guatemala but the twisted tentacles of United States monopoly capitalism, represented by the United Fruit Corporation whose anger has resulted in Dulles issuing bellicose threats from a world platform against the nationally progressive Government of Guatemala.

NEW MAGAZINES AND ALL THAT

HERBERT SMITH*

THE recent short-story competition sponsored by the *Sunday Times* was swamped by over eight-thousand entries; two new magazines have appeared in the past few months; *New Soundings* has become a third programme institution; spirited literary discussion has filled the correspondence columns of the *New Statesman and Nation*—and occurs in every journal once the subject of modern writing is mentioned.

From all this bustle some powerful result might be expected to arise and shake itself free of all these helping hands, and silence the concern about present-day literature, which equals existentialism as a topic for cocktail-conversation. But it must be admitted that, so far, the bustle exceeds the strength of the patient; discussion exceeds the thing discussed; the plans are as full of good intentions as the results are devoid of writing worthy of a second reading. It becomes obvious but not, apparently, understood, that new magazines will fail to achieve their purpose if they are edited according

*Mr. Herbert Smith works in a power station where there is considerable interest in literary matters.

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to policies that failed to serve the magazines they replace. It is no use giving an old magazine a new name and setting it upon the tracks that led the original magazine to disaster; neither will sympathy or charity avert the outcome, and neither will a new driver who believes implicitly in the man he has relieved. A new direction is the first requisite, and that is exactly what the editors and publishers are afraid to give; thereby establishing a dictatorship that is as inexorable as that which they choose to visualise exists in other countries.

Pessimism, introspection and abstruseness make up the Lord Chamberlain of our day; suppressing more effectively than that august personage ever could, sentiments and ideas that might damage the *status quo*. The mediocre and the obscure have become more acceptable than works of a disturbing or vivid nature, and, when faced with the debts incurred by this policy, the hand-picked young editors shrug their shoulders and retreat more deeply within themselves. Did not de Tocqueville warn of the debasing effect of democracy on culture? Is it their fault if the public has turned its back upon literature? If young writers are unable to rise to the occasion? Thus the initial fallacy—that of championing castrated art—gives rise to three other fallacies. It is a vicious circle, in which the young editors who have not even the power to defend themselves against personal attack (the *New Statesman* correspondence) prefer to believe the poor results of their negative policies to be occasioned by negative readers or impotent writers. This immediately reminds one of the contradictory practice of Tory politicians who, in time of slump, unload the blame on to 'apathetic' workers and world conditions, without admitting that they themselves have aggravated those conditions and that slump. Neither is the political tie-up out of place here, for one of the two new magazines mentioned—the *Encounter*—is a sort of Billy Graham amongst us, with Mr. Stephen Spender as the cold-gospeller, backed by American finance with avowed anti-Communist intentions; and the editor of the second magazine—Mr. John Lehmann—has more to say about the Soviet novel than about the debasing effect of Yankee scurrility upon our culture. The political and economic situations follow, naturally, from any criticism of our literature, thus proving many points made by Marxists in their discussions around other periods. It is not necessary always to revert back to Chaucer, Milton, Fielding or Dickens for examples of the impact of social environment upon culture, for we have, today, a classic example of that process; this silence of the Middle-Ages that has

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descended upon our artists is not unlike that which makes puppets of our politicians, and the threat of rejection to the outspoken or virile artist is not so very different from the threat of party-expulsion which awaits the M.P. at Westminster.

The editors of this period are chosen, not merely because they bow to this threat, but because they believe it to be a virtue; a facet of 'Western intellectual freedom' which is available to all but those who would really use it. It is not the blatant dictatorship of the fascist we are dealing with here, but the hypocritical, snobbish, in-the-swim pressures of a bourgeois democracy in a fairly comfortable period. The pattern is obvious; a correct upbringing and education, plus the lack of a mind capable of seeing beyond those enclosures. A university education may open a young man's eyes and send him well equipped and eager into the world; or it may rob him of vital contact with life and give him the illusion of mental completion. Editors are not drawn from the first category mentioned; anti-communist crusaders are not ready to finance young men who have views on the atom-bomb, and B.B.C. officials must protect themselves against would-be McCarthys, and so hire young men who are not prone to making a fuss.

But virile art poses awkward questions and certainly makes a fuss. And virile art, as the most perfunctory glance backwards assures us, ranges beyond a limited social sect. And virile art is an enemy of hypocrisy and those who would rather rest on the mediocre and complain of discomfort, than risk a sinecure and yet gain value.

The enemies of our literature then, are precisely those who claim to be its friends; the young and the not-so-young editors who represent various bodies which, in turn, represent the *status quo*. With their desiccated outlook and excessive self-contemplation, they are clogging the literary channels over which they have command. Beneath their tea-time discussions is waged, consciously or unconsciously, a blurred, but most active extension of the class war. They charm themselves with talk of an intellectual freedom and extol its virtues in short stories about psychopaths and near-suicides. It is so precious to them, this 'freedom', that they cannot bear it. And those who do not succumb to the hypnotic effect of such arguments may wonder why it is, indeed, that such a freedom never, never includes those who wear boiler suits and produce miracles with lumps of metal. Is it that there are no artists amongst the working class? Is it that the working man does not offer interesting material? Only a rarefied social plant living in some Hampstead glass house would say so. In our factories, offices and mines there

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abounds not merely the productive wealth of our nation, but a creative virility which, if given the chance, would transform our culture from a sickly and impecunious relative, into a stalwart that is quite capable of taking care of itself. There are many indications that this could be so; the Italian film renaissance dates from the time it concerned itself with the heart-breaks and triumphs of the ordinary man; the American novel of the thirties was great, precisely because it concerned itself with the American Tragedy and did not, as now, disappear into convolutions of self-pity and fee-chasing. And our own literature, judged over thirty years, reached two apexes: at the time of the civil war in Spain; and when we fought German fascism. Here is another lesson in practical Marxism to discomfort the young men with the air of literary mortality about them. From the social upheaval of the thirties came a spate of writers that are now nostalgically read and whose ghosts are still with us. No wonder Mr. Malcolm Muggeridge when reviewing one of the two new magazines on the Critics programme recently, was relieved to find the Spanish War not mentioned—and then proceeded to laud the anti-communist intentions of *Encounter*! No wonder this well-known Tory would rather forget the literary and political implications of the thirties! And how amazing it is that the editor of the magazine he was reviewing, who was first brought before us by the tidal wave of *New Writing* should, now that the wave has become a beach-puddle, concentrate on the melancholy outcome and not see the obvious conclusions.

Here they all are then, drawn up before a whole row of conclusions, and yet pretending that they do not exist. From personal experience they know the leavening effect on art of a social movement—and yet here they are talking about 'pure' art-forms and the need to be chary of propaganda. Here they are in the atomic age; an age of decision; in a country of working men—and there they are, rocking one another off to sleep with poems that are remarkable for the way in which they elude criticism by being completely unfathomable. The hot, or rather luke-warm, air rises, and we are left wondering whether the atom bomb, the American war-element, the British working class and so on do, in fact, exist. Judging from our literature it would seem that they do not. But the class considered not worthy of contributing to our literature may not be expected to spend cash at bookstalls on that literature; the person snubbed at a party may not be asked for the taxi-fare home. And the tragedy is that all suffer from this situation. The ordinary man continues to live on the edge of his own potentialities and reads

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Book Club editions which are a little more human than the ailing magazines of the highbrow, and the writer finds himself torn between the two categories; accepted if he does not give of his best, rejected the moment he dips his pen into reality; offered a choice between a debasing sort of wealth on the one hand, and the isolation of eccentricity on the other. The modern magazine editor is attacked in this article precisely because he occupies the position allotted him in the last sentence—between reader and writer—and because he does not use his authority to help break the deadlock of which he complains, and yet accepts without much fuss—thus joining the army of hypnotised conformists now displaying their impotence in parliament and art.

Meanwhile, in those neglected strata of society where new discoveries and energies are latent, there exists a seed that may well become a phase in our cultural development. The Marxists are, once again, providing the initiative. Literary workshops exist; discussion and criticism of cultural problems occupy the pages we devote in our newspapers to violent crime. Attempts are being made in every country and amongst the working peoples to hammer out a culture that is as politically conscious as ours is politically unconscious (but useful, nevertheless, to those who hoodwink the half-asleep), and they are learning to merge that consciousness with the formal problems of culture, and are aware of the humanism which links them to the masters of the past. In fine, those essential forces within a culture, the impetus of discovery and excitement of discovering, have been lost by the cultural conservatives of those inert countries which profess peace and multiply war-bases; extol freedom and fight colonial wars; dismiss social influence from culture and yet complain of their undernourished culture.

Problems and paradoxes there will always be; our literature fails because it is in the hands of men who are afraid to face them. The working man knows from his daily experience that man is, to quote Aristotle, a political creature, and that he can no more dismiss society from his life, than he can take his life away from society. He is more educated, more self and class conscious than ever before, and he is about to express all these things in a new culture. Our bourgeois culture mocks itself as surely as does a subjected nation that vaunts its own imperialism. Once again, the similarity is potent with meaning. But our editors cannot see it; they reject the reality that is strangling them; they are busy stirring the Pacific with a spoon.

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NEGRO HISTORY

WILLIAM GALLACHER

YOU have heard, or read, many and many a time about the high character of 'Southern Gentlemen' who lorded it over the cotton-growing States of America, of their devotion to culture and their equal devotion to the welfare of their Negro slaves. It is typical American fiction used for a specific purpose, that of keeping the Negro people as a lower and menial class in America despite the Civil War that was fought to liberate them. For associated with this idea of 'Cultured Gentlemen' was, and is, the equally fictional conception of the Negro as a lower type of human who was quite contented with his position as a slave and who would have been happy to be let alone. History, if it is studied, gives the lie to all of these pretences and presents to the student an entirely different picture. And the leader of the American Communist Party, William Z. Foster, has surely gone deep into this question; the result is to be found in a truly great book *The Negro People in American History*.* With the hand of a master craftsman he traces the history of the Negro people from 'the dawn of their known history' to their present-day position in America. It is an amazing story. It is certainly not the Negro who is the 'lower type' but, as is very obvious, the money-greedy slavers and slave-owners who, without human feeling, degraded, tortured and destroyed their coloured fellow-mortals in the shameful name of profit.

The 'Southern Gentlemen' were, in most cases, drunken debauchees and, while certain minor privileges were allowed the 'house-slaves', the field-slaves, and these were the great majority, were driven by brutal overseers, who liked nothing better than to use the lash, to the last ounce of their strength. But even more inhuman than these 'Southern Gentlemen' were the pious 'English Gentlemen' who built their fortunes and established their families on the utterly horrible and murderous trade of 'slaving'. It can be said that Liverpool built itself on this ghastly and nefarious business.

On page 19 we read: 'As in the case of all other primitive peoples —in Asia, America, Europe and Australia—the African Negroid peoples, prior to the coming of the white man, had social régimes based on the family. . . . Land was held in common'. Delafosse says that among the African tribes 'The ground, according to the

*International Publishers, New York; Collet's, London. 608 pp. 48s.

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native conception, does not belong to anybody, neither does it belong to all. . . . In fact the ground is a god that no one would think of appropriating to himself and still less of buying or selling. Land occupation is based upon usage and the cultivator owns the produce of his toil'. 'Under this system' says Delafosse, 'no member of an African community is ever in want'.

It was into such peaceful, primitive communities that the marauders came, armed to the teeth. They burned down the villages and drove the inhabitants down to the sea, not without a struggle, however unequal it might be. For the Negro people fought bravely for their freedom as they are bravely fighting in Africa and America today. And while in some cases they succeeded in driving the slavers off, in others the powerful weapons of their enemies were too much for them, so they were beaten down, chained and packed into the holds of ships sailing out from Liverpool for Africa to carry cargoes of tortured humanity to slavery in America. And in connection with the disadvantage of the Africans in the matter of weapons it is interesting to note that one of the most daring of Ireland's Liberation fighters, Dan Breen, has written a letter to the Irish press in which he says: '30 years ago I was a Mau Mau.' As to the Africans using knives, it is, he says, the only weapons they have. 'I didn't use a knife', he goes on, 'simply because I had more powerful weapons, I had a revolver in each hand'.

In the American Revolution—the War for Independence—Negro soldiers and sailors took an active part and gave a good account of themselves. On page 47 we read: 'Speaking of the Negro troops that took part in the battle of Long Island, a veteran, Dr. Harris, said: "Three times in succession they were attacked with more desperate valour and fury by well-trained, disciplined troops and three times did they successfully repel the assault, and thus preserved our army from capture".'

Their great service in the Revolution strengthened the demand for an end to slavery in the forefront of which were the Negroes themselves. Time and again in different parts of the Western World, they rose in insurrection against the hateful bondage that was imposed upon them. The greatest of all these was the historic victory of the insurrectionary slaves of Haiti. Of this Foster says on page 65:

> In this war, François Dominique Toussaint L'Ouverture, born a slave in Haiti, came forward as a brilliant general. He overwhelmingly defeated the British, Spanish and French forces. The British lost 40,000 soldiers in

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this struggle and the French still more. Napoleon, whose casualties were 70,000 men in the great Spanish campaign, lost 63,000 men trying to hold on to the rich colony of Haiti. Toussaint was the first military leader to defeat Napoleon. The final result was that the rebellious slaves won complete victory, chased their erstwhile masters from the island, freed all the slaves, took away the planters' land, and set up a republic which stands today. Toussaint was overcome only by being tricked into a peace conference where he was seized and then transported to a French prison to die.

Two things are worth noting about this: (1) The striking parallel between the treachery towards, and the murder of, Wat Tyler, leader of the Peasants' Revolt in this country 600 years ago and the foul treachery towards and lingering death of the leader of the Haitian revolt 150 years ago; (2) 40,000 British lads sacrificed in a war to force the Haitian Negroes back into slavery with the intention, if successful, of taking over the island from France. Now 150 years later we face the danger of British lads being sent to Indo-China in another French colonial war for the suppression of people fighting for freedom and independence. Only in this case it is the American imperialists who are forcing the pace and who expect to take over from a bankrupt France.

For Dulles is driving his policy not in the interest of Britain or France but in the interest of the American monopoly capitalists. They want the world for raw materials, markets and investment, and they will use and destroy Britain and France in the process if they are not brought to a sharp stop by the organised workers of their own and these satellite countries. Read of the grab for land by the big planters when King Cotton was enthroned in the Southern States—of the ruthless character of the seizure of Texas, and it gives some idea of what the rest of the world is up against today. Prior to 1773 and the invention of the cotton gin, cotton cultivation was negligible. Tobacco was the main product. But with the cotton gin there came a rapid development of cotton and for the planters an urgent demand for more slaves and more land:

> The planters' appetite for land was insatiable—they wanted to grab everything west to the Pacific Coast and south to Brazil, and they even eyed northern territories as potential slave plantations (p. 82).

Then take the story of the rape of Texas from Mexico (as given on p. 122) and you can see that no scruples of any kind halted these profit-hungry exploiters. And so it is with their kind today, only more so. Land and more land, slaves and more slaves, that is their pressing, mad desire and if they are allowed to go on they will destroy the world in their desperate efforts to attain it.

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The story of the growth of the Abolitionist Movement, its strength and its weaknesses, makes truly interesting reading. But many of those who were favourable to the abolition of slavery had no desire to see the Negro enjoying the same citizen rights as his white brother and so all kinds of illusory schemes were hatched for sending the Negroes back to settlements in Africa or in the West Indies. Despite these diversions and an occasional split, the movement grew stronger in numbers and in content. Among Negro leaders of the movement Frederick Douglass and Harriet Tubman take the foremost place while amongst the whites Thaddeus Stevens was out and out abolitionist in its fullest sense.

Two events that had a considerable effect in lining up the class forces for the civil war were John Brown's raid on Harper's Ferry and the publication of *Uncle Tom's Cabin* by Harriet Beecher Stowe. The book had a terrific sale and was a complete exposure of the idyllic picture of slavery the 'Cultured Gentlemen' of the South paid their hirelings to paint. In the North in particular it had its effect and it made the Northerners more determined than ever to restrict the area of slavery. And it was this restriction of area, represented by the rise of the Republican Party (the Democratic Party was the party of the slave South) and the election of Lincoln that led to the secession of the Southern States. The first shot in the Civil War was fired by the South. Lincoln entered the war not to free the slaves but to maintain the Union.

From the beginning of the Civil War Karl Marx took an intense interest in events. He and the small group of Marxists in the United States supported Lincoln, but urged on him the necessity of coming out boldly for emancipation as the sure means of raising morale and of ensuring victory for the North. Marx wrote many articles on the Civil War for the American press as well as for the European press. Horace Greeley, as Foster tells us, used many of these as his leading articles.

The Civil War started with the attack from the South on Fort Sumter on April 22nd 1861, and not until September 1862 was the historic proclamation issued by the President. But it was not easy sailing for Lincoln. Corruption then, as now, was rampant. All the big-money boys were grabbing for the easy dollar. Here is an example:

> One of the innumerable crooked deals of the period was put across by young J. P. Morgan. He bought up a lot of condemned United States rifles at two dollars each, sold them to the government at 15 dollars, bought them in again at three dollars 50 cents when the government re-

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condemned them and once more got rid of them to the military buyers at 22 dollars. (p. 247).

That helped to lay the foundation of the famous, or infamous, house of Pierpont Morgan. Not only corruption ate into the morale of the North, there were also influential and powerful capitalists whose interests lay in the South. These 'Quislings', known as 'Copperheads', did everything possible to aid the slave-owners. They fomented trouble of all kinds within the Army and in the towns and cities. Take this as example:

> The most serious disturbance in the North occurred in the big riots of New York City in July, 1863. New York had long been the centre of active pro-slavery agitation. This had as its base the big banking and commercial firms, which were closely tied up to the slaveholders. . . . The disturbances started when the draft drawings began in the City on July 13. Mobs destroyed the recruiting stations, set fire to an armoury, attacked the Tribune and prominent Republicans, burned a Negro Orphan Asylum and generally created chaos throughout the city. (p. 261).

All in all Lincoln and the forces he was directing had a tough time of it and on one or two occasions it looked as though the slaveholders were going to emerge victorious. And such a culmination was certainly the desire of the 'Democratic' (?) British bourgeoisie. King Cotton meant profit and profit had always been their god. Thus the British government started manœuvring for an excuse to intervene on behalf of the South, to use the British Navy to break the blockade imposed on the South by the North. And here we are presented with another extremely interesting parallel. Harry Pollitt in his May Day article this year in the *Daily Worker* declared that the British workers by forcing the government to change its policy can be the decisive factor for removing the threat of war, for saving and advancing the cause of progress and socialism. Well, that was exactly the case during the American Civil War: the workers of Britain were the 'decisive factor' and by mass demonstrations forced the government to change its policy and thereby played an outstanding part in deciding the issue of the Civil War.

Marx, writing to *Die Presse* in Vienna on this, pays an exceptionally high tribute to the British working class. They did a great job then. They can do a great job today.

The war ended with the surrender of Robert E. Lee on April 9, 1865. A short time later Lincoln was assassinated. His successor Andrew Johnson was a thorough reactionary. Between his policy and the violence of the Ku Klux Klan the whole reconstruction

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programme as envisaged by Lincoln broke down and very soon the 'Old Gang' was dominating the South again and the lot of the Negroes showed little improvement.

From then on it has been a never-ending fight against discrimination (Jim Crowism). Jim Crowism penetrated the trade union movement and the socialist movement. Only the Marxists showed an understanding of the Negro problem but even they failed to carry the solution to its logical goal. This is what Foster achieves in this book. It is a deep, searching study of the whole history and development of Negro life in the United States, particularly in the Southern States. In these States, where they are the majority, they have the right to nationality—Negro States—a Negro nation, integrated into the life of the American Union. This will be the outcome of full rights to the Negro people in America.

It may at first glance seem far off. But consider what is happening throughout the world. Everywhere the colonial and semi-colonial peoples are fighting, in their different ways, the battle for freedom and independence. With the most blatant bourgeois cynicism Dulles, backed by Churchill and Eden, Attlee and Morrison, prates of 'freeing' the coloured peoples of Asia while the coloured people of America still suffer all the indignities of Jim Crowism. Let them free that outstanding American citizen Paul Robeson. But no, it is freedom for the capitalists Dulles and his Tory and Labour hirelings want. Freedom to rule and exploit, freedom to pile up profits at the expense of the poverty and suffering of Asiatic and other peoples. They are not interested in freedom for the coloured people of Asia, any more than the coloured people of America. But like the people of Asia, so also are the Negro people of America on the move. The liberation movement there is taking on new strength, through a clearer political understanding of the class forces operating for and against them. Study this book in the light of all that is happening throughout the world and you will agree to the conclusion arrived at by the author:

> The complete victory of the Negro national liberation movement is on the agenda of history. Nor will it be long, as measured against their bitter centuries of persecution, before Negro men and women will walk in our country free in every sense of the word.

A 'Readers' Guide' to the study of this great book is published by the American magazine *Political Affairs*. If you can get a copy of the 'Guide' so much the better, but at all events get the book. It will repay all the study you can give it.

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Book Review

HELVETIUS

Claude Helvetius, by I. L. Horowitz. (196 pp. Paine-Whitman, New York. *$3.* Collet's, London. *24s.*)

MR. HOROWITZ has written a welcome book on the most consistent of the middle class materialist writers of 18th century France. Most of it consists of a critical summary of Helvetius' views on reason and religion, the ethics of utility, progress and politics, education, political economy, equality, and the theory of knowledge and passions. There is a general introduction on the 18th century Enlightenment and a final chapter comparing the utilitarianism of Helvetius with that of Bentham. The book deserves to be read with care because, scattered among the summaries of Helvetius' opinion and the passages which do not advance the reader beyond the point reached by earlier Marxist writings on this thinker, there are a number of acute and interesting new observations. Chapters 5 (Progress and Politics) and 8 (Equality and Equalitarianism) are perhaps the most useful.

Perhaps Mr. Horowitz idealises Helvetius a little. Perhaps also the English reader will be struck by some mistaken or superficial observations about 18th century Britain, and by the undue denigration of the English utilitarians. After all, what is the purpose of such a book as this? To discover what is progressive in the achievement of the rising bourgeoisie and to incorporate it in the heritage of our peoples especially now that the bourgeoisie has abandoned its progressive past. Admittedly the English political utilitarians were a sorry lot compared to the 18th century French (though not the English utilitarian economists). But the point to bring out is surely that even they were a great deal more progressive than their latter-day successors. To lump Burke and all generations of the Benthamites together, as Mr. Horowitz does (p. 157) is unsatisfactory. It obscures precisely what we want to discover, namely the stages by which bourgeois thought degenerated from the rationalism and optimism of a Helvetius to the irrationalism and pessimism of the present.

Mr. Horowitz should also be congratulated for his courage in bringing out a frankly Marxist work of scholarship in the U.S.A. today, and for overcoming what were evidently very great difficulties in publication.

E. J. HOBSBAWM.

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plains 'your magazine has become a necessity to me.' Another, despite lessening earning power, cuts down on other things 'because *L.M.* is a must for me.' Yet another from that vast territory sends a donation as a 'contribution for peace.'

Dips Into Our Postbag

CANADIANS weren't the only readers to praise the June number. Typical was an old friend from *Kent* who instantly ordered six more to 'distribute with pleasure, for despite the high standard this year, June excels from cover to cover'. From *Lancashire* and the *East Coast* come accounts of Labour Party readers each with his own *L.M.* 'round' of three; from the *North Coast* an alderman sends a copy of the local Labour paper printing a specimen copy form for 'this most valuable monthly'. Again from *Kent:* 'Please send copies to these two friends in the Labour Party. I have been a regular reader for some time, but must confess that up till now I've been guilty of hoarding the wealth of information in each copy'. From *the Midlands:* 'I feel sure that once introduced they will read it regularly. Being keen Labour Party members I think they will agree it is a must for them'. Here's a picture in a nutshell of the sort of people who read *L.M.*, those who need it and how it is brought to their notice. A *London* furnishing trade worker writes: *'A few months ago I started to introduce L.M. to members in my trade union branch. Now I sell three copies regularly and I think it is time to spread out a bit, so I shall be glad to take advantage of your free specimen copy scheme for the two I enclose. Both are good active trade unionists with progressive views; and I'm sure L.M. will be of value to them, particularly in its news of movements taking place among the working class, and above all in the Labour Party of which they are members. And here's a small donation and best wishes for a much wider circulation'.*

Tailpiece: Remember the Londoner who had won three out of ten of his New Year resolution target of new readers? He writes: 'I'm pleased to tell you I've got six now'. He is a length ahead at the turn! Total of May donations:

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STAND-IN MONEY came from: 'Bath', standing-in for Aylesbury, Pontypridd, Totnes, Warwick and Watford, 10s.; 'Billie', standing-in for Tonypandy 'in memory of Lewis Jones', 1s.; 'American Observers', standing-in for British Guiana 'in memory of Toussaint L'Ouverture', £1.

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